OIPE MAR 09 2007 PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Applicant(s):** | Toru Nagase, et al. | **Examiner:** | Melanie Ruano Tyson |
| **Serial No:** | 10/678,503 | **Art Unit:** | 3731 |
| **Filed:** | October 3, 2003 | **Docket:** | 17096 |
| **For:** | SURGICAL INSTRUMENT | **Dated:** | March 6, 2007 |
| **Conf. No.:** | 1949 | | |

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**RESPONSE**

Sir:

In response to the Official Action dated October 6, 2006, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above-identified application in light of the following amendments and remarks:

---

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.8(a)**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date set forth below.

Dated: March 6, 2007

Thomas Spinelli